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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 PM-06 NSC-10 SS-14 RSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-06

NSAE-00 DODE-00 L-03 PRS-01 RSR-01 /057 W

038325

R 021102Z OCT 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0657
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG
USDEL FRANCE
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Diane Izgalen DATE 1/26/82
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☑ RELEASABLE☑
RELEASE DENIED☐
FA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

10/21/71

SAIGON 15784

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 15784

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE OCT 3 BALLOTING

REF: SAIGON 14581

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. FOR REFERENCE ON THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION TO TAKE PLACE OCT 3 THE FOLLOWING STATISTICS AND COMMENT MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE. THE STATISTICS ARE FROM THE OFFICIAL GVN ELECTION INFORMATION CENTER.

(1) (A) 1967 PRESIDENTIAL AND SENATORIAL ELECTIONS:

	REGISTERED VOTERS	TURNOUT	PERCENT
MR I	911,861	786,588	86.2
MR II	1,123,362	1,002,239	88.5
MR III	2,114,173	1,684,226	79.6
MR IV	1,694,988	1,429,695	84.3
TOTAL	5,853,384	4,902,748	83.7

1132,862 INVALID BALLOTS WERE CAST

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(B) LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS:

	REGISTERED VOTERS	TURNOUT	PERCENT
MR I	1,117,533	938,240	83.9
MR II	1,278,043	1,038,903	81.2
MR III	2,209,502	1,597,740	72.3
MR IV	2,481,098	2,024,841	81.9
TOTAL	7,086,146	5,559,724	78.5

(C) 1971 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION:

REGISTERED VOTERS AS OF OCTOBER 1

MG I	1,130,658
MI II	1,282TUW
MR III	2,248,122 (INCLUDING 674,824 FOR SAIGON, 576,522 FOR GIA DINH)
MR IV	2,531,308
TOTAL	7,192YYP

(D) POLLING SUB-STATIONS

THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR HAS ANNOUNCED THAT TO FACILITATE VOTING THE NUMBER OF POLLING PLACES HAS BEEN INCREASED FROM 7,332 FOR THE LOWER HOUSE ELECTION (INCLUDING 617 IN SAIGON) TO *,18* (INCLUDING 755 IN SAIGON).
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BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL.
2. COMMENT. THE ADMINISTRATION IS MAKING A STRENUOUS EFFORT TO GET OUT THE VOTE, BOTH THROUGH THE CHAIN OF COMMAND DOWN TO VILLAGE AND HAMLET CHIEFS AND BY DIRECT APPEALS TO THE ELECTORATE. A MAJOR THEME OF PRESIDENT THIEU'S RECENT RADIO/TV SPEECHES HAS BEEN TO CALL ON THE PEOPLE TO VOTE. HE HAS ASKED THAT NON-CONFIDENCE IN HIM BE EXPRESSED BY CASTING A NON-VALID BALLOT BUT HAS URGED ALL TO GO TO THE POLLS.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, VICE PRESIDENT KY, AN QUANG AND OTHER OPPOSITION ELEMENTS HAVE CONDEMNED THE ELECTION AND CALLED FOR A BOYCOTT; THE COMMUNISTS APPEAR TO BE DOING THE SAME.

4. HOWEVER, THE PERFORMANCES OF BOTH ADMINISTRATION AND

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OPPOSITION HAVE BEEN SINGULARLY UNIMPGESSIVE AND THE ELECTORATE WILL MOST PROBABLY DO WHAT COMES NATURALLY. AS NOTED IN PREVIOUS REPORTS, PEOPLE IN VIET-NAM TREND TO VOTE ON ELECTION DAY, PARTIALLY OUT OF A SENSE OF DUTY (OR CONFORMITY), PARTIALLY OUT OF FEAR OF POSSIBLE HARASSMENT BY THE AUTHORITIES IF THEY DO NOT HAVE THEIR VOTER CARDS STAMPED AND CLIPPED. MOST PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS MOREOVER HAVE BEEN UNCONCERNED WITH THE POLITICAL GYMNASTICS LEADING TO THE UNCONTESTED ELECTION AND WILL GO TO VOTE AS THEY WOULD FOR A CONTESTED ONE. HAVING GONE TO THE POLLS THEY WILL VOTE FOR THIEU AS THEY THINK THEY ARE EXPECTED TO TO. A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF THE MORE POLITICIZED VIETNAMESE IN THE URBAN AREAS AND WHERE THE OPPOSITION IS STRONG, SUCH AS AN QUANG IN MR I, WILL PROBABLY EXPRESS THEIR OPPOSITION TO THIEU, AND TO THE CONCEPT OF AN UNCONTESTED ELECTION, BY STAYING AWAY FROM THECKPOLLS.

5. WE NOTE THAT ASIDE FROM A PASSAGE IN PRESIDENT THIEU'S SEPTEMBER 20 SPEECH AND PASSING MENTIONS IN NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, NEITHER ADMINISTRATION NOR OPPOSITION IS SAYING MUCH ON HOW TO CAST A NON-VALID BALLOT.

6. ACCORDINGLY, WE BELIEVE MOST OBSERVERS WOULD AGREE WITH PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY HOANG DUC NHA WHO TOLD A CORRESPONDENT THAT THE TURNOUT ON OCT 3 WILL BE ABOUT THE SAME AS THAT FOR THE RECENT LOWER HOUSE ELECTION. OF THOSE WHO GO TO THE POLLS, AN OVERWHELMING PERCENTAGE (WE HAVE SEEN ESTIMATES RUNNING AS HIGH AS 95 PERCENT) WILL VOTE FOR THIEU. WHATEVER FIGURES FINALLY EMERGE, WE ASSUME THEY WILL SHOW THAT WELL OVER 50 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE (I.E. OVER HALF OF ALL 7 MILLION ELEIGIBLE VOTERS) HAS VOTED CONFIDENCE IN THIEU, MAKING HIM A "MAJORITY PRESIDENT."
BUNKER

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